Attempts at arriving at comprehensive theories of translation have been bedevilled by two extremist debates. The first of them, between "literal" and "free" translation, is as old as the craft itself and has indeed survived many attempts to reduce it to common sense. The second, between literary and linguistic approaches, seems to be the direct result of the modern penchant for producing theoretical models for practically anything. To my mind the most far-reaching attempt to show the uselessness of the dichotomy between "literal" and "free" is to be found in Steiner's *After Babel* (pp. 300 et seqq). For when either literal or free translation are used with skill and discretion, they are capable of "restoring the balance of forces, of integral presence" (p. 302), and when used in the wrong place they are equally inept.

Steiner's comments on the issue, and my own on Steiner (*The True Interpreter*, 213-214), take it for granted that the concern with literal and free translation is purely instrumental, and so has very little to do with the central issue, translation as communication. The debate between linguists and men of letters is equally jejune as both sides take their part for the whole. In general, the linguist focusses on translation as a series of linguistic operations, taking communicative intent for granted. The literary theorist on the other hand discusses the intent of translation at considerable length while making only the vaguest comments on translation as a linguistic act. Very few critics of translation have had the wit to see that these are complementary not contradictory views, though a unified view of translation theory, as fore-shadowed by George Campbell at the end of the eighteenth century, is beginning to gain ground.

In my view a theory of translation should have three parts:
a. delineation of purpose flexible enough to cover all possible uses of language;
b. description of the linguistic means used in translation;
c. a comprehensive account of how the two are related.

We do not lack for theories relating to the first two of the above heads. Indeed a modern academic whose field of research is the uses of language is caught between the traditional views of philosophers on the relationship between language and thought, the twentieth-century analyses of the psychological and sociological importance of language and languages, and the literary person's concentration on language as a creative tool. And no matter what linguistic theory is in fashion, the range of hypotheses on language as a set of operations and communicative strategies is still bewilderingly wide. But the most difficult part of the theory is part c. For this attempts to account for the changes of translation over time. The way in which the operations of a useful art like translation are related to the results is governed by taste, sensitivity, and factors which relate to the person in his society.

Where the actual purposes of translation remain constant just as the goals of language itself remain the same for all generations, translation techniques have not changed for centuries (even if our ways of describing them have). But styles of translation have been accommodated to changes in taste and sensibility just as the use of language has adapted to the sensitivities of the societies that speak it. And normally when one speaks of a "good translation" outside a schoolroom, the norms applied are those of personal and social taste with only indirect extrapolation to the actual operational side of the task. And naturally these norms change: so that a great piece of literature like Pope's Homer can fail to meet the translation norms of a period with different tastes, like the nineteenth century.

One other fault in the debate between the literary scholar and the linguist is ignoring the importance of
the reader. For it is he who gives the final shape to a translation, or to any work of art for that matter. If translation is to be thought of as communication, one must remember that the reading of a translation is not a passive reception of the translator's version of things, but an act of active interpretation which gives shape to the text according to its own content, its intent, and the intent of the reader.

We are faced then with a set of disorganised sources for theoretical discussions of translation, even if all of them have much to say that is important. One of the most daunting problems in translation theory is finding a unifying principle for tying up all the loose ends. One possible source for such a principle lies in the language theories of the Lutheran theologian, Gerhard Ebeling.

Since Schleiermacher translation theory has been strongly influenced by a religious hermeneutic tradition running back through Luther to the fourth-century Latin Fathers, Augustine and Jerome. Ebeling himself was appointed president of the Commission for the Publication of the Works of Martin Luther in 1969, having alternated between various Chairs of Theology at Tübingen and Zürich. His *Introduction to a Theological Theory of Language*, published in German in 1971, and translated into English in 1973 by R.A. Wilson, lays out a theory of religious action based very deeply in language. One is not at all surprised to trace the influence of Martin Luther, nor of Augustine, whom Luther admired very deeply. But what seems unlikely at first blush is the importance of ideas one also finds in writers stemming from the Vienna School. Though not acknowledged, writers like Cassirer, Buber and even Freud are as much part of his intellectual baggage as Cicero, Quintillian and Luther.

Almost alone among modern language theorists Ebeling refuses to see contradictions between the various warring factions in modern language theory. In his view language

... is ultimately nothing other than the power which creates understanding and brings people to under-
stand each other (Introduction, p. 23).

His discussion of this statement revolves around questions made familiar particularly by Ernst Cassirer. Language is ultimately meaning rooted in a systematic network of symbols and the relationships between them. Learning a language is then learning how to express meaning, and ultimately learning meaning itself, a view one finds expressed in much less mystical terms by M.A.K. Halliday. And like Buber and Heidegger, Ebeling sees language use as something creative, something which conspires with experience to produce change.

But unlike his hermeneutic confères Ebeling tries to integrate modern linguistics with modern hermeneutic theory. He derives linguistics from the ancient and medieval trivium, a curriculum based on grammar, rhetoric and dialectic. These three disciplines regulate the production of language: grammar sets the structural rules, rhetoric deals with the practical issue of how one uses language to say something, and dialectic shows one how to speak to somebody else. In all a very old-fashioned view of the role of the trivium that is reflected in the development of school grammars. Like the trivium linguistics is positivist in that it regulates the observable. Like theology, of which it still is the instrument, hermeneutics tries to account for the unobservable, to examine the messages that utterances pass, to account for similarities and differences in intent and perceived meanings, to have something useful to say about the effects of time and distance on what is said in the key books of a religion. The major instrument is still the assembly of the "Four Meanings of Scripture" proposed by Augustine, the pervasive risk is losing all objective control of what one perceives. Ebeling proposes that while linguistic analysis puts an essential brake on hermeneutic wool-gathering, hermeneutics will put some quickening spirit into the dead bones of linguistic enquiry.

Ebeling situates the modern crisis in Christianity in "boredom with language, boredom with words". From a
Christian point of view, as long as the language by which the world was described and the language of religion were co-extensive, language remained vital. One of the most interesting illustrations of this is the interweaving of religious and secular language in the apothecaries' handbooks in England under Cromwell, and its continuance to illustrate a different religious experience after the Restoration of Charles II. The secular dimension of this problem, foreseen by George Orwell's *1984* and *Animal Farm* is the debasement of language so that it becomes a vehicle for deception and control. One could add to Ebeling and Orwell other indices to me just as disturbing. The first is the endemic distrust of language among certain parts of the artistic community and the reduction of its meaning to obvious sound patterns, like the Catullus versions of Celia and Louis Zukovsky. And just as indicative is the complete divorce between language and communication in Walter Benjamin's influential *Die Aufgabe des Übersetzens* (1923).

To somebody in the Vienna traditions this is doubly disturbing, not merely because it results in blockages in communication through mistrust or deliberate deception, but because it brings to an end the creative aspect of language through which the human being develops within himself and society. It effectively blocks the efficient creation of shared symbols; and relationships between God, self and each other will wither. The hermeneutic theorist takes Shakespeare's poet as an essential part of every person:

> The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
> Doeth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
> And, as imagination bodies forth  
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
> Turns them into shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
> A local habitation and a name. (Midsummer Night's Dream V.i. 7)

And if one can not trust language, this is impossible.
Ebeling sees four parameters in a theory of language, and their application in a practical language situation would underlie any therapeutic action. Though Ebeling himself has very little to say on translation, these four parameters can also apply to translation, and indeed can be used as a comprehensive theory of translation. For if translation is to be taken as a language act, that is as an act of communication, they should fit without any difficulty. These four parameters, rephrased to fit here, are:

a. challenge to the understanding;
b. arrival at mutual understanding;
c. exercise of authority to communicate by translation;
d. responsibility to translate.

Under these heads the difficulties of translation rest in coming to terms with the creative powers of both source and target language. These issues are best discussed in relation to a variety of texts. I shall be illustrating from the official English version of the collect for the 5th Sunday of Easter, (1969), Walter Harris's version of Lémery's preparation of silver nitrate (1675), Louis Cazamian's version of Wilfrid Owen's *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, some French versions of a passage of Adam Smith, and part of the 1982 report of the Canadian Commissioner of Official Languages.

**Challenge to the Understanding**

Ebeling has a very person-centred view of what language is about: one uses it "to set the listener into action in the direction of understanding". Any encounter between people by means of language takes place within a topic, what Ebeling calls a "space". What he means is put more clearly by Martin Buber, whose speaks of "experience", and C.S. Lewis, who speaks of "focus". "Space" is not only textual content, but also the intention of the speaker. Discussion of this "space" or "focus" are often couched in metaphors of violence. Ebeling is no exception, and postulates that expression begins in interpreta-
Wrestling for verbal expression is always, therefore, a wrestling to understand the substance of the matter which it is intended to utter (Introduction, page 118).

From St. Jerome's metaphor of leading the meaning captive into the target language to Steiner's "agression" metaphors of physical violence are frequent in translation criticism.

The translator's task, then, begins in understanding both meaning and intent of the target text. Out of his understanding will rise a target text that will command the "same assent" among second-language readers as among first.

Given the importance of word-meaning in theology, law and normal human intercourse, Ebeling takes traditional theories of the word for granted, and leans very heavily towards the Platonic theory of the logos. But he follows Luther in his concern for grammar. By this he means not only grammar in the narrow sense, but also the message structure of the text. He accords it two roles: it is both a model of universal logic, and a model of the logics peculiar to a given language. Therefore a translator must interpret the grammar with the same care he interprets words, not blandly imitate it. An excellent illustration of how this is done is Harris's version of Lémery:

Dissolve one or two ounces of Coppel-Silver in two or three times as much Spirit of Nitre; pour forth your dissolution into a Glass-Cucurbite, set it in a gentle Sand-fire; evaporate about the fourth part of the moisture, and so let the rest cool without stirring it, it will turn into Crystals, which you must separate from the Liquor, and after you have dried them, keep them in a Viol well stopt. You may again fall to evaporating half the remaining Liquor, and set it a-Crystallizing as before. You may repeat these
Evaporations, and Crystallisations till all your Silver is turned into Crystals. (Harris, 1675)

Faites dissoudre une ou deux onces d'argent de coupelle, dans trois fois autant d'esprit de Nitre: Versez votre dissolution dans une petit cuscourbité de verre, & au feu cendres tres-lent, faites évaporer environ la quatrième partie de l'humidité, puis laissez refroidir ce qui restera sans le remüer, il se formera des Crystaux que vous séparerez de l'humidité; & les ayant fait secher, vous les garderez dans une phiole bien bouchée: Vous pourrez encore faire évaporer à demy la liqueur; puis la faire crystaliser comme devant. Réitérez ces évaporations & ces crystallisations, jusqu'à ce que vous ayez retiré tout vostre argent en Crystaux.

Among excellent illustrations of how differing grammars show differing logics, Harris's handling of the French factitive verbs stands out. In French these verbs are intransitive, but their semantic equivalents in English can be either transitive or intransitive. Therefore Faites dissoudre becomes "Dissolve". But English representation tends much more towards kinesis and process than French, so we find imaged translation: "You may again fall to evaporating" for Vous pourrez encore faire évaporer, and "Set it a-Crystallising" for ... la faire Crystaliser.

Grammar always shades off into discourse structure, and only professional stylists make the difference consistently. In the Lémery passage the stages of the preparation are sometimes grouped within the consequent effects on the grammar: & au feu de cendres tres-lent, faites évaporer, a subordinating construction, is coordinated in English ("... set it in a gentle Sand-fire; evaporate ..."). And further down the passage the participial construction, & les ayant fait secher is "...after you have dried them ...", a much looser connection. The point here is that English even during the seventeenth century preferred to infer logical connections through sequence, while French likes to spell
them out.

This is a good example of Luther's principle of looking to grammar. The effects of flagrantly violating grammar, even in the interests of clarity, are obvious from the English version of the Roman Missal. Here is the Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Easter.

God our Father,
look upon us with love.
You redeem us and make us your children in Christ.
Give us true freedom
and bring us to the inheritance you promised.

Deus, per quem nobis et redemptio venit
et praestatur adoptio,
filiose dilectionis tuae benignus intende,
ut in Christo credentibus
et vera tribuatur libertas et hereditas aeterna.

The grammatical and rhetorical structure of the Latin are in complete harmony. After the vocative, Deus, a relative clause details a divine act, then follows a petition, and finally comes a final clause which relates directly to the relative and in this case reflects its structure. In short the prayer rises from the introductory vocative to a conclusion flowing from the divine act or attribute given in the relative. The parataxis of the English destroys the directionality of the prayer, quite apart from the misplacing of the matter of the Latin relative. The English does more than merely replace a rhetorical tone by a conversational one: it also destroys the carefully-wrought theological lesson of the original. The instruction from the International Committee of English in the Liturgy was to make these prayers understandable even to the less educated. But by confusing complexity with complication the liturgical translators finish with a clear illustration of Ebeling, page 174:

(Language) ... does not fulfil its task any better, for example, the more it reduces the listener's need to think. What language can and ought to achieve is
made all the more clear, the more a statement provokes thought.

Mutual Understanding

Here the focus is on the dyad of enunciator and receiver, or in the terms of Culioli, énonciateur et co-énonciateur. In purely language terms understanding between speaker and hearer depends not only on a commonality of meaning through the utterance, but also on a sharing of intention. For both putting the utterance together and interpreting it are goal-directed acts. In translation terms the position is made more complicated by the double role of the translator: he is both receiver and emitter, énonciateur and co-énonciateur and anything but a passive way-station between the writer in one language and the reader in the other.

At an extremely gross level mutual understanding depends on word-meaning and on the over-all message of the sentence units which go to make up the whole communicative text. Thus the chemical reaction in Harris and Lémery is the production of silver nitrate by dissolving pure silver in dilute nitric acid inside a glass retort. A modern readership is excluded by the terminology, but Harris’s was a group of initiates who shared the knowledge and attitudes of the author. One can question whether the translator of the Latin collect approached his task with the full understanding the author had. *Adoptio* is a charged word in the Latin liturgy, particularly in close proximity to *filius*. It recalls St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans viii.15:

"... but you have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father".

And this translation not only loses the reference, but also blocks the reader perceiving that it was ever there.

However to produce "mutual understanding" in Ebeling’s sense complete verbal fidelity is not really necessary. The extent to which one can interpret the original to arrive at an equivalence of tone and matter can be seen
from the 1982 Report of the Canadian Commissioner of
Official Languages which traditionally has had a very
breezy style in both French and English. One of the
complications here is that it is not clear which is the
source text. Thus the heading: "Programme Costs: Keeping
Tabs" is "Les programmes: l'addition s'il vous plaît". The
French clearly recalls a restaurant. The English is a
little more complex: "keeping tabs" is a relatively
colloquial term for keeping a check on something. And in
North American English "the tab" is a restaurant bill.

Hence the relatively simple image of formal, and
perhaps extravagant dining-out in French is captured by a
number of circuitous images in English. The tone set up
is one of amused exasperation at the Government agencies
concerned, and the slightly conspiratorial concern of
taxpayers discussing government inefficiency.

Because languages have different modes of representa-
tion, "mutual understanding" has to be arrived at by
functional rather than formal equivalences. In English
the first sentence of this paragraph is a statement with
high affective loading:

Some of the costs of running the federal administra-
tion in two languages can be all too easily itemised:
Such loading is difficult to achieve in French, which
gets around the problem by a rhetorical question, which
by a direct appeal to the reader injects affective
tension:

A combien nous revient une administration fédérale
fonctionnant dans les deux languages? Les postes
suivants peuvent nous en donner une idée:

Ebeling (Introduction, 86) sums this issue up in a short
paragraph on the "ontological differences between langua-
ges". For "a language can be marked throughout by the
understanding of reality which is dominant in it", an
issue that has become important in the linguistics of
translation especially since the Second World War.

One very old difficulty in "mutual understanding" is
the cultures in which languages are embedded. These can
present intractable problems, for different languages as
d-handed on to the present generation of speakers represent
different amalgams of experience Introduction, 205). Take,
for instance, Cazamian on Owen:

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes,
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers, the tenderness of silent minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Quel glas pour ceux qui meurent là comme un bétail?
Seule, la monstrueuse fureur des canons,
Seul, le claquement vif des fusils bégayants,
Peut marteler leurs corons précipités.
Nul mensonge pour eux de prières, de cloches,
Ni nulle voix qui se lamente, sauf les choeurs,
Les choeurs déments, aigus, des obus gémissant,
Et les appels des clairons tristes au lointain...

Quels cierges élever à leurs derniers moments?
Non dans les mains des jeunes gens,
mais leurs prunelles,
Brilleront les leurs pieuses des adieux.
Leur poêle sera la pâleur des jeunes filles,
Leur fleurs, l'affection d'âmes silencieuses,
Chaque lent soir, la fermeture des volets.

A rather competent translation whose lapses are due
partially to Ebeling's "ontological differences", par-
tially to cruder sociolinguistic differences. Since
Charles Bally first discussed the differences between the
intellectual representation preferred by French and the sensorial preferred by German, there has also been a considerable body of writing on the different ways in which French and English words represent their object. Lines 3 and 4 of the English depend on the "image-word", whose sound is as important a part of the meaning as what it "signifies". The dental plosives of "stuttering", "rapid", "rattle", "patter" depict fairly accurately the sharp, fairly light, irregular but continuous sound of sustained rifle fire. As well "patter" denotes to say a prayer quickly and carelessly as a matter of routine. This complicated interplay between sound and senses Cazamian misses because his language will not sustain it. Marteler and bégayer are too heavy in sound, claquement too staccato, but bégayer has another problem: it translates only the painful hesitation of the stutterer's speech, not the staccato delivery of many of his speech sounds.

Cultural institutions afford more tractable problems even if Cazamian does not fully visualise the cultural setting of the text. The imagery is affected strongly by the Anglican liturgy: the boys of line 10 are choir-boys, not the vague jeunes gens of the French. And they are taking part in a solemn funeral liturgy with its candle-lit vigil where the ministers and choir carry the candles. Among the untranslatable elements of the poem is "shire", used here for home, family, and ancestral roots as well as distance from the battle-field.

Thus mutual understanding goes a bit beyond knowing what is meant: it also means knowing how the author means and producing a passable equivalent in the target language. One of the characteristics of Adam Smith's late eighteenth-century prose is a calculated use of a rising sentence. Is it an accident that the populist revolutionary, Blavet, uses a falling sentence, while the aristocrat, Garnier, reproduces Smith's oratorical tone as well as his facts?

La division du travail semble avoir été la principa-
le cause du perfectionnement des facultés qui le produisent, de la dextérité, de l'habileté et du jugement avec lesquels on l'applique et on le dirige (Blavet).

Les plus grandes améliorations dans les facultés productives du travail, et la plus grande partie de l'habileté, de l'adresse et de l'intelligence avec laquelle il est dirigé ou appliqué, sont dues, à ce qu'il semble, à la division du travail (Garnier).

The greatest improvement in the productive powers of labour, and the greater part of the skill, dexterity, and judgment with which it is anywhere directed, or applied, seem to have been the effects of the division of labour.

The work done on the ways different social classes use language and react to it would suggest that the deliberate rejection of rhetorical flourish in Blavet is as carefully directed towards his readers as Garnier's carefully-crafted sentence.

Authority to Translate

"Authority to Speak" is the first of Ebeling's theoretical categories. He makes a necessary distinction between the possession of language and the authority to use it. In application to translation the most obvious beginning to a translator's authority is knowledge of the two languages involved. The second is knowledge of the subject and of how it is to be brought into the target-language society. Ebeling's questions about the speaker's authority are equally valid to the translator:

a. Is the apprehension of the message sound or unsound?

b. Is the utterance in which the message is expressed adequate or inadequate?

c. Can the translator vouch for the "truth" of what he writes if he has not experienced it?

Traditionally these questions have been discussed
within what the translator knows, subject-matter, languages etc., but Ebeling always has the sense that language and its applications are essentially communicative acts. Therefore a translator's authority rises not only from the knowledge he is traditionally supposed to have, but also from clear assessments of the powers and failings of his readership.

If, therefore, we go back over the documents already referred to, the question of authority to translate comes up in many guises. Walter Harris, the translator of Lémery, was a physician, the founder of English pediatrics, and like all physicians of his time was a good chemist. Thus his authority to translate rises from his position as colleague to Nicholas Lémery, a French-speaking equivalent. Like the technical use of language, this authority is uni-dimensional, as it touches nothing beyond the intellectual content of the text. The positions of the Canadian Government translator and the liturgical translator are superficially similar. But in the case of the Canadian translator, it is fairly sure that he was a member of the policy team involved, and had had much to do with the drafting of the original. In short, the translator was in the know about the subject of the text, and deeply committed to it. Hence the less than official tone of the version: Canadian bilingualism is not only politically sensitive, it also rouses strong passions among the general public, and the task can not be undertaken if one is lukewarm. Nor is an official tone useful in a document addressed to the public.

However the liturgical translator was facing a Latin text he had not had a hand in making. In many cases these translators were not theologians by profession, and the Roman Catholic Church was facing the unfamiliar situation of creating a liturgical vernacular. The Protestant Churches had already done this several centuries before in a social climate very sure of the different ways in which language was fitted to formal and informal situations. Creating such a language in a world trying to redefine its relationship to God, and in a climate suffering from Ebeling's "boredom with language" is certain to be almost
impossible, and translators interpreted the Vatican's directions to make the liturgy understandable even to the less educated as removing from the necessity to think. In so doing they seriously weakened the theological and liturgical communicative function of the payer.

At times the question of authority becomes politically tangled. Between 1776 and 1825 Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* had five translation into French, each one coinciding with a change of régime. Their prefaces make interesting reading: each translator worked with an eye to guiding France towards financial stability after the latest political upheaval. There are oblique criticisms of previous translators, oblique in the sense that comments on their competence are certainly meant to be read as political comments. The most unkind is about a certain Citoyen Blavet whose 1800 version had been commissioned by the revolutionary government. He is accused of being a poet rather than a writer, and of knowing nothing about economics. It is not without relevance, I think, that it is the Vicomte Garnier, working for Napoleon, who waxes most sarcastic about his predecessor. And yet in practical terms there is very little to choose between any of the versions.

As one of the foremost *anglicistes* of this century Cazamian's authority to translate Owen would seem unassailable. But given the complexity of literary discourse, the stakes are considerably higher than in technical work. The Romantic dream of bringing one more possession of beauty over into the target language is a fair statement of the literary translator's responsibility, but it implies that the translator's authority rests on more than a liking for his source text. Over the centuries the translator's authority has been seen in terms of friendship, of being another self to the author, of being a critic, of making a portrait. For all these approaches authority rests on knowledge and sensitivity. It is unfortunate that the extent and bounds of authority are best seen through lapses. Cazamian may have been unaware of the full ceremonial of a funeral: there is almost a monastic tone to Owen. In any case, Cazamian
does not seem to have adverted to the liturgical role of the English choir-boy. Not doing your homework impugns your authority to act. Much more subtle is the question of how far one can stretch one's own language to deal with peculiarities of the source text. Any translator would envy Lewis Carroll's Humpty-Dumpty for his ability to make words obey him: particularly in literary translation a writer's ability to push his target language to the limit without going beyond the possibilities of communication is an essential element in his authority to translate.

What emerges from this is that authority to translate objective texts is relatively easy to assume and exercise. The communication lies on an intellectual level that must not touch the other powers of the person. Authority to translate becomes increasingly difficult to justify as the function of the text moves towards the creative or the inter-personal away from dealing with mere ideas and objects. For the responsibility there becomes one to the author, as perceptive critics of all periods have known. Translating an objective text one does not agree with merely demands knowledge; translating uncongenial literature requires intense self-control.

Responsibility to Translate

Authority entails responsibility. It is unfortunate that the question of a translator's responsibility has been discussed largely in literary terms. These are by far the most difficult and complex, matching the act of literary creation itself. At the other end of the continuum is technical work, as uni-dimensional as technical language, and as essential. And, in the present state of translation, technical work is far more common than literary. Each translation has within it the power to create an experience that will produce change. What that will be is up to the translator, who is at the focus of a process designed to have lasting repercussions.

My own view is that one should be very wary of translators who are conscious of a mission to change the world: in language, as in religion and politics, such
people can be dangerous more often than they are beneficial. If we look at the repertoire of translators before us, their consciousness of their own importance and responsibilities varies. Walter Harris, like most medical and pharmaceutical translators of his time, was intensely aware of the ferment going on in the medical professions. Harris well knew how important a figure Nicholas Lémery was in French medicine, and considered him a corrective to "the Glut of Bad Chemistry Books" circulating in England. In Ebeling's sense (page 207) this is a "timely" translation as it was produced to fit a need which Harris perceived through his expertise in chemistry. And, mutatis mutandis, the same applies to the translators of Adam Smith, the Canadian Government team, and the liturgical translators. Like all literary translators Cazamian is a special case because his responsibility to the "ideas" of the work, both objective and subjective, and to his public is amplified by the relationship a literary translator has to his author.

Moral theology has long directed behaviour by the principle that to achieve great things one takes extreme care of the little. This shapes Ebeling's approach to language in use; and it is directly applicable to translation. For any act of language has results: the Platonic theme of the word as signum efficiens runs through language criticism from Philo Iudaicus to George Steiner. Interpretation is as crucial a responsibility as production. Much of what Ebeling says on this point was said more comprehensively by the great translators -- the dictum that translation is weighing out words recurs over the twenty centuries between Cicero and Valéry Larbaud. The translator's prime responsibility is exercising judgement about words: first about those of his source text, and then about those in his target text. Their meaning is not the only point at issue: the communicative function of both source and target text will determine how meaning is handled.

The translator's responsibility is usually seen in terms of "fidelity". Discussions of this thorny concept have swung between the two poles of fidelity to the
"words" and fidelity to the "ideas" of the text. Ebeling transcends this rather limited view in two ways. For to him language is both an instrument of communication and an important object in its own right.

One usually takes it for granted that a translation will fill a need in its society equivalent to that the original filled in the author's society. This is not always the case. Great writing in any genre has a habit of becoming literature, take Cicero's forensic speeches, or an important political treatise like Thomas More's *Utopia*. But the five exemplars referred to in this paper were all meant to fulfil the same task in the target culture as in the source. If we look at them from the point of view of Karl Buhler's three-fold typology, Harris on Lémery and the French versions of Adam Smith all pass objective information (Buhler's "symbol"), Cazamian's Owen is self-expression ("symptom"), and the liturgical and government documents have as their main aim persuasion ("signal"). Judgements of quality are nuanced by the balance sought between thing and addressee, between objective and subjective, in text and translation.

The rule-of-thumb methods we all use as both speakers and translators to achieve "fidelity" or make an utterance congruent with its function fit neatly under Ebeling's "responsibility for language". Ebeling's discussion of this revolves around the interpersonal uses of language, whether the act of language "was in place in the actual situation". But even if an act of language is "in place" it must be "rightly used". Thus the translator's responsibility for and to both his languages begins in Luther's dictum that all interpretation begins in grammar. It comes to fruition in working out what is possible and appropriate in the target language. Given all its defects the Cazamian is a relatively acceptable translation: Cazamian version has sacrificed what he had to make sure that Owen passes into another language.

That a translator's responsibility does not always have to be viewed with a high hermeneutic seriousness is clear from the Canadian translator. These reports have
set up a tradition of a slightly sardonic journalistic approach to a problem that has plagued Canada since the beginning. Acceptance of a rather costly public policy that raises unexpected questions and falls foul of deeply-rooted sensitivities depends largely on what translators do with the original text. Hence responsibility to the message in these reports is balanced by responsibility to write good English or French, and to use resources of both languages to the full to present content without either distortion or the foreign flavour a translation often can not avoid. Thus it is not only the message of the text that is interpreted, but also its style and language.

In my view the liturgical translators have failed their responsibilities by allowing one aspect to outweigh the others. In an effort to make this and other collects understandable "even to the less educated", they have given the objective content of the prayer without the connections between its parts. It is not impossible to translate these collects and keep the grammar intact. It is, however, unwise, because English does not have the same periodic sense as even ecclesiatical Latin. What is needed is a principle of equivalence that will show the flow of thought better than the parataxis of this version. To my mind this is a bad translation, not because it makes hay with the structure of the source text (both Cazamian and the Government translator do this), but because it shows a blatant distrust of both the English language and those who use it.

Conclusion

Though the weight of Ebeling's thought on language is in the hermeneutic tradition, it is a theory of language that deals with both its nature and its use and which shows how modern linguistics and modern hermeneutics can fit together and complement each other. Apart from Ebeling, Martin Buber, Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger show how the social role of language rises out of the human power of systematising the world to oneself by creating linguistic symbols and by organising them in
structured systems. But where the theologians and philosophers have been interested mainly in what happens when language is used, linguists from a wide variety of theoretical backgrounds have produced theories on what M.A.K. Halliday calls the "way languages mean". Halliday is, however, a relatively late arrival. Coherent theories on this go back to at least Charles Bally's stylistics during the first years of the century, and the contrastive work of the Prague School linguists.

What does Ebeling offer in the search for a translation theory?

Ebeling presents language as an amalgam of knowledge and experience which is systematised for the purpose of communication. He has very little to say on the differences between languages, merely dropping a series of unsystematic hints about different "logics" and different "powers of expression" inherent in different languages with which a translator must come to terms. It is rather peculiar to see an approach to language rising out of the intellectual climate of turn-of-the-century Vienna focussed by references to Martin Luther. And it is this that leads us into translation.

The centre of the translation act is interpretation. In a theologian like Ebeling we find reminiscences of the Latin Fathers, particularly Saint Augustine, though the more immediate catchcries are the German Romantin Erkärung and Ezra Pound's "casting light". What is to be illuminated is the relationship between signifier and signified, between Saussure's signifiant and signifié. Language can never be "emancipated" from its obligation to "mean". Yet, the more an utterance calls on the creative power of a language, the less stable is the Saussurean division between signifiant and signifié. The translator then is faced with a double task of interpretation: first he must work out what and how the original means, and then what the possibilities are in the target language.

It is here that Ebeling's insistence on the role of grammar and language structure is essential. In translation as in preaching, interpretative creativity can lack
control unless there are some fixed points. This is one utility of Luther’s insistence on grammar and rhetorical structure. Ironically the same idea appears in George Campbell, one of the great Biblical translators of the end of the eighteenth century, and is fully worked out by the seventeenth-century English schoolmaster, John Brinsley. One is saved from word-for-word translation by having to interpret the logic of the source grammar in the light of the logic of the target grammar. And this makes for a range of viable solutions ranging from using identical structures to making equivalence rest on purely semiotic considerations.

To the semantics and the structural possibilities of words, the two traditional dimensions of meaning, Ebeling adds a third, the intent with which it is used. Translators, being essentially concerned with language in action, have worked within the consequences of varied language functions from the very beginning. The classical rhetorician’s doctrine that style varied according to matter appears constantly in translation criticism until the end of the eighteenth century, when the Romantic translators made a sacred cow out of Art, and dealt translation theory a blow from which it is still recovering. The fact that texts are presented as technical, literary, religious or academic texts to translators obscures the initial assessment of what the text is for. For the function of the text provides Ebeling’s "space" within which words have meaning. Hence the translator’s constant question, "What is the context of this expression?" and the growth of sociolinguistic approaches to translation (cf. Maurice Pergnier, Les fondements sociolinguistiques de la traduction). In the balance between these three aspects of meaning, the semantic, the grammatical and the intentional or social, practitioners have long been ahead of theoreticians. Ebeling offers a frame in which these "energies of meaning" (as Steiner calls them) can be considered and analysed.

In short, what Ebeling’s language theories offer the translation theorist is a comprehensive frame into which
one can put the various warring theories to see where they really differ and where they are commplementary. It is a theory of language in action, an updated version of ancient rhetoric and Patristic hermeneutics. It offers a unified view of both the mechanics and results of human communication in terms general enough to apply to any act of language, of which translation is one of the most intractable to analysis.